

A TRUE NARRATIVE

Of a strange Prodigious

TOAD

For Size and Shape full Fourteen Inches Long, and
Ten over: the Back on the Hinder parts with a
Tayl Three times as long as his Body, with a
Forked Sting at the end.

SEEN BY SEVERAL LATELY AT A

HUNTING

ABOUT THE

Devils-Arle-oth-Peak

in DARBYSHIRE

The Sculpture of which, in Copper, will shortly be published,
And Examined as to both more narrowly by some who are
now in the City, and whose usual Curiosity in things so rare,
led them to this Exactness of Observation.

With Allowance, ROBERT STRANGE

Printed in the Year, MDCLXXVII.

Soc. Reg. Lond. (2)

A True Narrative of a Prodigious Toad,
seen at the Devils Arse-o'-th. Peak,
in Darby-Shire.

THere is nothing so common as Natures variation through luxury or poverty of matter, and some concurrent accidents, which taking the opportunity of time and place, assist in producing such an Animal Mineral, or Vegetine, as because of it's rarity will seem strange to the world.

For Barnicles some years ago, nay now, are not believed by the ninth part of ten of the Nation, though several Authours have writ, and many thousands seen the manner nature has contrived for them-; they therefore that can have little belief for anything, of which they have not had an ocular demonstration are not expected to give credit to this ensuing Relation.

HAlf a Dozen of the meaner sort of Darby-shire designed a Hunting, Coursing or Potching rather, having for that purpose got Beagles, Grey-hounds, and a Peece or two, thus furnished, they beat about the Peak, where they started a Hare as some held, others a Rabbet, which they eagerly followed, until that frightened Creature

ture ran into a hollow in the earth ; at the entrance of which stood the Dogs, not daring to go in ; but when the company came together, and had consulted a while, they resolved to enter and drive out the prey, the cavity being large enough, the most couragious went in a good way, but one whose heart or weariness had caused to stay behind, sat him down on a great stone loose and moveable ; and whether by sitting down he stirred the Stone, he presently conceived his fellows were gone too far, he called them back, telling them, that what they looked for was under the stone he sat on : upon which they returned, carrying a Beagle or two in, which durst not voluntarily approach, then very circumspectly they turned the stone, but found their expectations jilted, for which they called the Informer a silly Coxcomb, who had hindred their further search ; but he confidently aver'd he perceived something move, and laying his hands angrily upon the stone, laid his fingers upon a round hole in't, into which he try'd to thrust his hand, but failing, cry'd, he would lay his Soul to a Pot of *Darby-Ale*, that the prey got in at that hole, upon which they all try'd, and one whose hand was slenderer, thrust it in, arm and all, and finding his utmost finger to touch a hairy live body, swore bloodily, and curst himself to the Devil, it was a Rabbit, for he

felt it; upon which the Inventor reply'd, I knew I could not be deceived, then they all agreed to rouse the stone out, being near to the mouth; but they were never the better to further their design.

The most ingenious of them cut a Bryer, flitting the end of it a cross, and afterwards cut it to point towards the middle, and gently thrust it in, until he found it stop upon something that was soft, then he began tenderly to turn it, and drew out a hoary fur, which they concluded to be the belly of the Babber; after many essays, finding themselves disappointed, they resolved rather then loose their expectations, to get some Iron Mawls and Barrs, and so break the stone to pieces, which they borrowed, and presently sold to Work, and after considerable pain they split the stone, in the midst of which to their amazement and great disappointment, they found a Toad of prodigious shape and size.

After their astonishment was something over, their anger took place, which they intended to vent against the innocent poor endures; when by mere accident a Stranger came by, and seeing in what confusion they stood, drew out an arrow equally surprized, but finding that they had prepared to brain themselves with part of his own Castle, entreated them to forbear, and to recompence their pains in some measure, he would gratifie their Civility with a Dazel of Ale, which they Gladly accepted of, and

immediately went to Drink, whilst he had the liberty of viewing this monstrous creature, which he found to have all the parts of a Toad and more; therefore having competent skill in Limning, and having the advantage of Pencil and Paper about him, did with all exactness Draw this strange Animal, which from his own hands came to mine, whose Description you shall now have, and when the Engraver with whom the figure is, has finished it, that shall be also presented to you.

This Creature was in Length exactly Fourteen Inches: as it Sat it was Ten Inches and a Half over; upon the hinder parts of his Back, and the fore part eight and a Barley-Corn, how high it might stand he knew not, for it sat all the while crooking down; its nose was as black as jet; proportionable to the rest of its body; and of each side adorned with Bristles; under his Eyes was a perfect Seaming made Cistern-fashion, of a Green colour, whilst his eyes most delicately beautiful, seem'd to drop that way; over which were placed bristles of a muddy green; under his Gills were Flapps like two scollop shells, of the Colour of a Gurnets fins, admirably blew and shining, & always expanded; under them were two Pouches or Bladders, of a deep Orange colour, larger then the Fins, being as big as ordinary Pear-plumbs, and something of that figure; the head had a Sea-Green scaly Armour on, which ran along its back.

back within four Inches of its tail ; the hinder-part was covered with perfect Hair, but dusky, hoary coloured, of the same manner was that as went along the sides and feet. But what is yet most strange, is his Tail, which was thrice as long as its body, which it wore on its back, something like the True-Loves-knot, and tho' it seem'd so intricate, yet when he offered to turn this creature on its back to view its belly, it flung its Tail as sudden as the jirk of a Coachmans Whip, & had not he stood sideways, he might have had too much cause to have repented his curiosity ; but as it hapned it's tail fell into a slit of that stone which was its former Mansion, and though the poor Creature strove hard, yet it could not release it thus engag'd; upon which there appeared as close as might be, onely reckonable, a hundred ninety seven scaly rings, jetty, black, and shining, which he made a shift by this means to reckon, and may be guess'd to be the indications of its Annual extenſion; at the end of the Tail was a forked sting, within an Inch of which was a small Pouch, of the colour of Gum Bugia.

The Gentleman finding his Over-grown Toad in this posture, would have gagg'd the Toad, but no sooner had he touch'd its Nose, but it recoil'd backwards, even off the Stone, which it seem'd so to Hatch, and Cherish before. But there being an unfortunate

fortunate hollow or miss of ground, where this rare
 Animal falling, & not coming quick enough to the
 ground, the said Satchel or Pouch neer the sting
 broke, out of which there issued the most Diapha-
 nous Yellow Liquor as ever was seen, deeply stain-
 ing the stone, upon which the Toad that then hung
 above-ground fell down, his Tail freely coming to
 him; which he had not enjoy'd above three Mi-
 nutes e're he departed this scurvy world: but before
 it received its change, it gave three such shrieks that
 the stranger was not onely forc'd to stop his ears:
 But this Lamentable Dirge, forc'd the Neighbours
 out of their Houses: He perceiving the Creature
 quite dead, took a fresh resolution, and turn'd it up-
 on its back, and found its belly to be as white as the
 driven snow; cover'd with a most delightful down;
 about that time when he was busie viewing this
 pleasing Object, his Nose was surpriz'd with a most
 ungrateful Stench, which he found to proceed
 from that Limpid Yellow substance that the Toad
 had spilt, in which (it seems) its Seal of Life was
 plac'd. Just at its Departure its Head mov'd, and
 it vomited forth a Triangular Stone, being an
 Inch from each Angle, and in Depth according,
 which he drew to him with a Staff, keeping his
 Fingers upon his Nose: and when he had got it
 at a Convenient Distance, he Doubled some
 Paper.

Paper and took it up, folding it in several folds of the same Paper, and after lapt it carefully in this Handkerchief, and presented it me, with the Figure. And who before, I was in the number of the Incredulous, and so far from giving credit to the many Excellencies of this Stone, that I question'd its Existence, and guess'd it to be onely the off-spring of some pregnant, yet imposing fancy: Yet now upon my short experience, I dare assure the World, that the virtues ascribed by Authors to it, come far short of its performance: And questionless had some curious Virtuofus of our times been present at this Prodigious Accident, they might have prepared Medicines of equal Memory with their Fame.

from that Lampid Yellow substance that it had hid in which (it seems) its Seal of Life was plac'd. Just at its Departure its Head mov'd, and it vomited forth a **Small Stone**, being an Inch from each Angle, and in Depth according, which he drew to him with a Staff, keeping his Fingers upon his Nose: and when he had got it at a Convenient Distance, he Doubled some

